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NEW FORMAT

THE SANDMAN™

MASTER • of • DREAMS

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SUGGESTED FOR MATURE READERS

GAIMAN • KIETH • DRINGENBERG

ONE. TWO. THREE. FOUR...

HER NIPPLES ARE HARD AND DARK AND SHRUNKEN ON BREASTS LIKE EMPTY POUCHES.

HER *HAIR* COMES OUT IN *CLUMPS* WHEN SHE MOVES. SHE *TRIES* NOT TO MOVE TOO MUCH.

RADIO 1

HER *SKIN* IS *FLAKING*, INFECTED AND INFLAMED. *BEDSORES* COVER HER *BACK* AND *LEGS*.

TWENTY-EIGHT. TWENTY-NINE. THIRTY...

ZAPPA

HOT TALK

HER FINGERNAILS GREW LONG AND BRITTLE; THEN THEY BROKE OFF. THE RAGGED NAILS RIP HER SKIN WHEN SHE *SCRATCHES*.

HER STOMACH *SHRANK*, THEN *BLOATED*. THEN IT *SHRANK* AGAIN. HUNGER SUBSIDED TO A LOW *NAGGING* IN THE BACK OF HER MIND.

IT'S *OK*. IT GOES AWAY.

LIKE THE *PAIN* GOES AWAY. LIKE *EVERYTHING* GOES AWAY WHEN THE *DREAMS COME*.

...SHE FEELS *REALITY* EBBING *BACK*.

DELAY THE *PLEASURE*.

DELAY THE *DREAMS*.

WILL SHE *DISSOLVE* IT IN HER MOUTH? *BREATHE* IT? *RUB* IT INTO HER *SKIN*?

NINETY-SIX. NINETY-SEVEN. NINETY-EIGHT...

SIXTY-FIVE. SIXTY-SIX...

SHE'LL *WAIT*.

IT DOESN'T *MATTER*.

SHE'S *COUNTING* TO A *HUNDRED*.

BZZZZZZZZZZZZ

CLICK

SILK CUT

WARNING

AM

--FOR ALL YOU CRUMBLIES OUT THERE, HERE'S ONE FROM THE VAULTS. A REAL RAVE FROM THE GRAVE...

COUNT NINETY-NINE AND KISS ME. JUST HOLD ME TIGHT AND TELL ME YOU'LL MISS ME. BIRDS SINGING IN THE SYCAMORE TREE...

...DREAM A LITTLE DREAM OF ME.

=KHOFF KHAK! KHAKK!=

10 45

NEIL GAIMAN WRITER

SAM KIETH & MIKE DRINGENBERG ARTISTS

TODD KLEIN LETTERER

DANIEL VOZZO COLORIST

ART YOUNG ASST. EDITOR

KAREN BERGER EDITOR

HAVE YOU EVER HAD ONE OF THOSE DAYS WHEN *SOMETHING* JUST SEEMS TO BE TRYING TO TELL YOU *SOMEBODY?*

THERE WAS A SMELL OF *MAGIC* SOMEWHERE, LIKE THE *BLUE-SPARKS SMELL* OF *OZONE* AT A *FUNFAIR.*

I'D JUST HAD THIS *NIGHTMARE.*

11:15

THESE *THINGS* WITH FACES LIKE *APPENDECTOMY SCARS* WERE CROCHETING MY *INTESTINES* INTO *BODY BAGS* FOR THE *BLIND* AND *DEAD.*

...BLAST FROM THE PAST OLDIE BUT GOODIE THE MAN WITH THE MAGIC...

11:19

I TOLD MYSELF IT WAS ONLY A *DREAM*, BUT IT DIDN'T *MATTER*. THE *BASTARDS* JUST *KEPT* ON BLOODY *KNITTING.*

AM 11:20

♪♪♪♪ MIS-TER SANDMAN I'M SO ALONE, AIN'T GOT NO BODY-- CLICK

"HULLO LONDON."

"HULLO JOHN CONSTANTINE."

"HOW ARE YOU THEN, LONDON?"

"ALL RIGHT. FULL OF PEOPLE. RAINING. YOU?"

"AAH. NOT BAD. IT'S ALMOST LUNCHTIME, SO I'M HEADING INTO TOWN FOR BREAKFAST."

"GOOD IDEA, JOHN."

"THANK YOU, LONDON."

ED Easy Diner

MORNING, LEIGH.

GIVE US A CHEESEBURGER AND *TWO* MUGS OF COFFEE. IT'S GOING TO BE A *LONG* DAY.

AND GIVE US SOME FIVE PENCE PIECES FOR THE *JUKEBOX*...

WHAT ARE YOU PUTTING ON?

"*I HEARD IT THROUGH THE GRAPEVINE*". USED TO SING IT WITH *MUCOUS MEMBRANE* AGES AGO. PRACTICALLY MY THEME SONG...

♪SWEET DREAMS OF YOU... EVERY N-I-I-IGHT I ♪ GO THROUGH...

YOU GOTTA LEARN TO PRESS THE RIGHT BUTTONS, JOHN.

5P PLAY

SELECT AFTER EACH COIN

A B C D E G
1 2 3 4 7

♪...THE WHO-OLE NIGHT ♪ THROUGH INSTEAD OF HAVING SWEET DREAMS ALL ABOUT YOU...

...SOMETHING TRYING TO TELL ME SOMEBODY..?

SOMEBODY TRYING TO TELL YOU *SOMETHING*? YUP.

I THINK IT'S YOUR *GIRLFRIEND, OUTSIDE*. HEHE.

WHUMP WHUMP

JESUS! MAD HETTIE...

F.O.A.D.

THE ...CAL

CHESS

TOILET

'E'S BACK, JOHN.

DIVERSION ENDS

La Reasa

WHO'S BACK, MAD HETTIE?

YOU ORT TER KNOW, SMART BOY. *MORPHEUS*. THE *ONEIROMANCER*. YOU KNOW...

...THE *SANDMAN*.

'E'S *BACK*.

THE *SANDMAN*? MAD HETTIE, YOU'VE *GOT* TO BE PULLING MY *LEG*.

DIVERS END

CHEEKY YOUNG JACKANAPES!

LOOK, THE *SANDMAN'S* A *FAIRY STORY* YOU TELL *KIDS* TO GET THEM OFF TO SLEEP. SPRINKLES MAGIC *DUST* IN YOUR *EYES* AND BRINGS YOU...

...SWEET DREAMS.

I'M TRYING TO *SAVE* THE *WORLD*, MAD HETTIE, AND *YOU* WANT TO TELL ME *FAIRY STORIES!*

NOW *YOU* LISSEN TER *ME*, JOHN *CONSTANTEEN*, YOU LITTEL *PRICK!*

I *SED* THE SANDMAN, AN' I *MEANT* THE BLEEDIN' *SANDMAN!* 'E'S *BACK*, JOHN. AND 'E *WANTS* 'IS *OWN*.

I *KNOW*.

I'M *TWO 'UNDRID* AND *FORTY-SEVVIN* YEARS *OLD* AND I *KNOW!*

'E'S *BACK!*

DIVER

FUNNY THING IS, SHE *IS* TWO HUNDRED AND FORTY SEVEN.

THE SANDMAN, EH?

I SUPPOSE I'LL HAVE TO LOOK INTO IT.

HE LEFT THE *PORSCHE* HALF A MILE BACK DOWN THE ROAD. HOPES IT WON'T GET *STOLEN*. THERE ARE SOME REAL *THIEVES* AROUND THESE DAYS.

THEY CALL THEMSELVES *CREEPERS*. IT'S A *SPORT*. *BREAKING* INTO PEOPLE'S *HOUSES* WHILE THEY'RE *STILL* AT *HOME*.

DURING THE *DAY* HE'S AN *INVESTMENT* COUNSELOR.

CHECKBOOKS. CREDIT CARDS. CDS. VIDEO TAPES.

HE THINKS OF IT AS HIS CONTRIBUTION TO THE FREE MARKET ECONOMY.

AND HE...

HE...

HE...

HE *MUST* BE *DREAMING*.

HE CAN FEEL THE WARM *TIGHTNESS* OF HER *SKIN*; THE SCENT OF *SEX* IS *HEAVY* IN THE AIR.

HER *LIPS* TASTE OF *ROSES* AND *PASSION*, AND SHE *HOLDS* HIM LIKE HER *LIFE* DEPENDS ON IT.

THIS IS *TOO* GOOD.

TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE.

HE'S HITTING A HUNDRED AND FIFTY IN THE LAMBORGHINI OF HIS *DREAMS*.

EVERYBODY'S GREEN WITH *ENVY*. THE ACCELERATION GOES ON FOREVER.

JESUS.

HE'S *DYING* FOR THEM AND THEY *LOVE HIM*.

HE'S *PURE* AND *PERFECT* AND HE'S *DYING* FOR THEIR *SINS*.

HE CAN SEE HIS *PARENTS*, HIS *BOSS*, HIS *LOVERS* IN THE CROWD BELOW HIM.

THEY'RE *SORRY* NOW. SORRY THEY TREATED HIM SO *BADLY*. BECAUSE HE'S THE *SON*.

LAST SON OF A *DEAD PLANET*.

STRONGEST MAN IN THE *WORLD*.

HE CAN DO ANYTHING.

ANYTHING.

ABSOLUTELY *ANYTHING*.

FOR THE NEXT FEW DAYS I *KEEP* MEANING TO *INVESTIGATE* THIS SANDMAN STUFF. I JUST *NEVER QUITE* GET *ROUND* TO IT.

MY *OWN* RESEARCHES KEEP ME BUSY ENOUGH.

OOOO-OOOH... ♩♪ SWEET-DREAMS-ARE-♪ MADE-OF-THIS... WHO-♪♪ AM-I-TO-DISAGREE?...

ONE THING I'VE *LEARNED*: YOU CAN *KNOW ANYTHING*. IT'S *ALL* THERE. YOU JUST HAVE TO *FIND* IT.

...TO CALL MY OWN... I WANT A ♪♪ DREAM LOVER, SO I DON'T HAVE TO ♫ DREAM ALONE...

DREAMS ARE LIKE ANGELS... THEY KEEP BAD AT BAY... ♩♫♪

I *DREAM* A *MESS* OF *LEY-LINES* AND *LEPTONS*, *PLASMA* FIELDS AND TURF *GIANTS*.

THEN THE DREAMS GET *SCARY* AND *BAD*.

AIDS

AS PER USUAL.

IT WAS ON THE THIRD DAY THAT HE CAUGHT UP WITH ME.

KLIK

John Constantine, I presume.

WELL, I'M *NOT* DOCTOR *LIVINGSTONE*, PAL. HEH.

SORRY. LITTLE JOKE.

VERY LITTLE.

I SUPPOSE *YOU* MUST BE--

Something of mine came into YOUR possession. A leather POUCH, full of SAND.

I want it BACK. Where is it?

THAT *POUCH*? THAT WAS *YEARS* AGO. *YEAH*, I BOUGHT IT IN A *GARAGE* SALE IN *SAN FRANCISCO*.

I KNEW IT WAS *POWERFUL*. BUT I NEVER EVEN MANAGED TO GET THE *DRAWSTRINGS* OPEN...

WHERE IS IT NOW?

I HAVEN'T SEEN IT FOR *AGES*. BUT THE ODDS ARE IT'S DOWN IN CHAS' *LOCK-UP*, WITH ME STUFF FROM... PADDINGTON. *AND* FROM THE NOTTINGHILL PLACE.

AND THE EAST CROYDON FLAT BEFORE THAT...

Let us retrieve it, then.

I *HOPE* YOU DON'T EXPECT ME TO GO ON *PUBLIC TRANSPORT* WITH *YOU* DRESSED LIKE *THAT*.

BE *DEAD* EMBARRASSING.

Is this better?

...AUHH.

I OUGHT TO INTRODUCE YOU TO THE BIG *GREEN* BLOKE. YOU'D *LIKE* HIM.

HE HASN'T GOT A SENSE OF HUMOR *EITHER*.

We have been looking for two hours, Constantine Patience wears thin.

E.W. CHANDLER

I do not believe it is here.

If it were here, I would be able to feel it.

WE'VE STILL GOT A *LOAD* OF STUFF TO GO THROUGH YET, BOSS.

KEEP SMILING. IT'LL TURN UP.

HOW DID YOU LOSE THIS POUCH, ANYWAY?

It was stolen from me. By a man called Burgess.

THE OLD *"DAEMON KING"* HIMSELF, EH?

BRUJERIA
THE PLANT ELEMENTAL
CRISIS
AMERICAN GOTHIC
LIVERPOOL
TIBET

1981

YOU MUST BE *OLDER* THAN YOU *LOOK*.

DAMN!

1981

I *DON'T* KNOW WHY I HANG ON TO ALL THIS STUFF.

IF THERE WAS A *FIRE* IT'D BE LIKE MY WHOLE *LIFE* WAS GOING UP IN FLAMES...

UH, BOSS. I *THINK* I KNOW WHERE YOUR *POUCH* IS.

OH.

JESUS, OH JESUS.

BLOODY *HELL.*

'ERE, JOHN, CAN WE STOP AT A SERVICE STATION? I'M PARCHED. I TOOK OFF WITHOUT ME TEA.

TAXI

NO.

ULN243X

YOU HEARD THE MAN, CHAS, OLD MATE. SORRY. I AIN'T NO MARK FOR THE VENUS OF THE HARDSELL...

I KNOW I OWE YOU, JOHN. BUT THIS IS PUSHING IT.

Drive us, Mister Chas. You WILL be rewarded.

UH. IT'S JUST CHAS, MISTER... UH...

JOHN? WHAT DO I CALL HIM?

YOU DON'T CALL HIM.

HIS KIND JUST TURN UP OUT OF THE BLUE. THEY CALL YOU.

EVERYONE SHUTS UP, AND CHAS JOLTS US UP THE MOTORWAY. OUR VISITOR MELTS INTO THE BACK SEAT SHADOWS.

MAP

AND I REMEMBER RACHEL.

AMAZING RACHEL.

JUNKIE RACHEL.

WE WERE LIVING TOGETHER IN A HIGH-RISE FLAT IN EAST CROYDON. I WENT TO ALASKA FOR SIX MONTHS, OVER THE LUPUS AFFAIR.

WHEN I GOT BACK SHE WAS GONE. ALONG WITH ME STEREO, THE TELLY, ME SILVER SURFERS -- ANY OLD JUNK SHE COULD CONVERT TO MONEY.

AND SHE'D LONG SINCE CONVERTED THE MONEY INTO JUNK.

STUPID BITCH.

SOMETIMES I STILL MISS HER.

EITHER OF YOU GENTS MIND IF I PUT ON THE RADIO? NO?

I WISH I'D REALIZED THAT SHE'D NICKED THE POUCH AS WELL, THOUGH.

♪THE CANDY-COLORED CLOWN THEY CALL THE SANDMAN... TIP-TOES THROUGH MY ROOM EVERY NIGHT... JUST TO SPRINKLE STARDUST...♫

"CANDY-COLORED CLOWN"? YEAH, RIGHT.

RIGHT. THIS IS IT. "THE BRAMBLES."

WE'LL ASK HER *DAD* WHERE SHE'S *LIVING* THESE DAYS, AND GO *FIND* HER.

NO PROBLEMS, EH?

HER DAD'S *ALL RIGHT*. RETIRED *AIR* PILOT. *NICE MAN*. WE'LL GET YOUR *BAG* BACK.

The POUCH is HERE.

HOW DO YOU *KNOW*?

I KNOW.

The POUCH is here. And MORE than the Pouch...

This house is DANGEROUS, Constantine.

CHAS. STAY IN THE CAR. ROLL UP THE WINDOWS, *LOCK* THE DOORS.

YOU *TAKE OFF* AT THE FIRST SIGN OF *TROUBLE*. *RIGHT*?

BUT, JOHN--

NO *BUTS*, MATE. YOUR MISSUS *HATES* ME AS IT IS.

LET'S NOT GIVE HER A *REASON* TO. EH?

RACHEL WAS *ALWAYS* PLAYING WITH THE *POUCH*. KEPT GOING ON AT ME TO TRY TO OPEN IT.

K23PNB01

SHE'D ASK ME, WHAT'S THE POINT OF *HAVING* SOMETHING *MAGIC* IF YOU DON'T *USE* IT?

I KNEW THE *ANSWER*. BUT I KNEW SHE'D *NEVER* UNDERSTAND.

WELL, THERE'S NO *ANSWER*. AND IT'S *LOCKED, BOLTED* AND *ALARMED*.

LET'S GO ROUND THE *BACK*, WE CAN *SMASH* A WINDOW, GET IN *THAT* WAY...

NO.

MAIL

We go in by the FRONT door.

KREEK

IT SMELLS *STRANGE*. PART OF IT REMINDS ME OF THE MONTH I WORKED FOR AN *UNDERTAKER*; ALL *FLESH* AND *FORMALDEHYDE*.

'S WEIRD: SMELLS ARE A HOTLINE TO *MEMORY*.

NAW, I'LL STICK AROUND. I'M *INTRIGUED*.

ANYWAY, I WAS *FOND* OF RACHEL ONCE. SHE WAS, YOU KNOW, THE *GIRL* OF MY *DREAMS*.

FOR A *WHILE*.

Constantine...

This place is not SAFE for you.

Things are free in this house that should NOT be loose on Earth.

You must not stay here.

THE ELECTRICITY'S CUT OFF. THERE'S SIX MONTHS' WORTH OF MAIL ON THE DOORMAT.

WHAT'S BEEN *HAPPENING* HERE?

Watch out for the HUMAN.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, WATCH OUT FOR--

AAAH!

THU-DUMP

HUMAN.

IS HE...?

YES.

He's ALIVE. After a fashion.

CLICK

WHAT *HAPPENED* TO HIM?

He's being eaten by dreams.

You need light. Is that better?

UH. SURE. THANKS.

I'VE BEEN OUT OF MY DEPTH BEFORE. SOMETHING TELLS ME THERE ARE *SHARKS* IN *THESE* DEPTHS.

I *OUGHT* TO BE RUNNING AWAY. BUT.

RACHEL...

MOVIES. OLD DARK HOUSE. HORRIBLE MENACE ON THE LOOSE. "LET'S SPLIT UP." MUFFLED SCREAMS IN DARKNESS...

UH... WE'LL STICK TOGETHER, WON'T WE?

Of course.

UNTHINKING, I REACH FOR THE LIGHT SWITCH...

YECHH.

CHRIST. THERE'S SOMETHING ON THE WALLS.

ON

SOMETHING WET.

AND.

AND.

AND I CAN SEE THE CLOUDS. THEY LOOK KIND OF SOLID. AND THE GROUND BELOW THEM.

THAT LOOKS *REALLY* SOLID. IT'S A LONG WAY TO FALL.

AND I'M *FALLING.*

HOW DID I *GET* HERE?

I DON'T WANT TO DIE. I DON'T WANT TO FALL.

CONSTANTIIIIINE!

MEMORY FILLS IN: THE PLANE ON FIRE; I JUMPED..?

I WAS: THE PILOT? NO. A PASSENGER, THEN?

I TELL *MYSELF* IT'S NOT THE FALL. FALLING DOESN'T HURT...

...IT'S WHEN YOU *STOP.*

John. You're HERE.

UH.

...SO REAL.

YAAAH!

It is NEVER "only a dream," John Constantine. HERE less than some other places...

YOU WERE THERE, TOO.

A *DREAM.* IT WAS *ONLY* A *DREAM.*

More light.

JEEESUS.

WHAT *IS* THIS STUFF?

A human body. What's left of it. Your woman's father, I would surmise.

BUT IT- IT'S STILL ALIVE.

That's right.

I FEEL ***SICK***. I CAN FEEL THE HOT DOG AND COFFEE I GRABBED FOR DINNER TRYING TO FIGHT THEIR WAY BACK UP FOR AIR...

HOW?

The Pouch.

LEAVE HERE
LEAVE HER
LEAVE THE WOMAN
SHE IS OURS
DO NOT DISTURB
"THE WOMAN"? RACHEL! SHE'S THROUGH *THERE*.
DO NOT DISTURB US
DO NOT DISTURB HER
ALWAYS FROM HUNGRY
WE FROM HUNGRY
I DON'T *CARE* WHO YOU BLOODY ARE! WE *WANT* TO SEE *RACHEL*!
FOOLISH FOOLISH
HEAR IT POSTURE?
HEAR IT THREATEN?
VERY FOOLISH
FOOLISH MEAT THINGS
Let us through.
WHO SAID?
WHO SPOKE?
NOT HIM
NEVER HIM
HE'S GONE
ALL GONE LONG GONE
This has gone far enough. You have exceeded your bounds.
MASTER...?

MASTER
DO NOT
CHASTISE
DESTROY
SORRY
SORRY SORRY SORRY
MASTER
DREAMS, RIGHT?
...right.
AND YOU'RE *REALLY* THEIR MASTER?
WE THOUGHT YOU LONG GONE
YES YES
...yes.
THOUGHT SO.
I DON'T WANT TO THINK ABOUT THE *SMELL* IN HERE. PEAR DROPS. KETONES.
APPA
SEWERS. MORGUES. GARBAGE.
HELL...
HELLO?
ALIVE. SHE'S ALIVE.
RACHEL?
JOHN...? IS THAT YOU?
I'VE HAD SUCH A WONDERFUL DREAM.

DREAM DREAM DREEEEAM...

WHENEVER I WANT TO...

ALL I HAVE TO DO... IS...

...DREEEEEAM...

JESUS.

RACHEL.

JESUS.

I have the pouch. The dreams will return to their proper location, in time...

We can GO now.

THE BAG? MY BAG. BUT IT'S NOT MY BAG...

IT HURTS...

YOU CAN'T LEAVE HER LIKE THIS.

Why NOT?

Her metabolism is obviously DESTROYED. The sand was the ONLY thing keeping her ALIVE. She will die soon.

Painfully, I would imagine.

...SEE THE SUN SET IN THE HAND OF THE MAN...

I SAID YOU CAN'T BLOODY LEAVE HER LIKE THIS!

OUU. NN. OUGHH.

Very Well, Constantine. Go outside.

BUT-- YEAH. ALL RIGHT.

RACHEL.

SWEET DREAMS, LOVE.

THE VEIL *TEARS*. AND SHE FEELS THE *FLESH* FLOW BACK ONTO HER *BONES* AGAIN.

AND SHE KNOWS *HE'S* WAITING FOR HER.

JOHN.

HULLO, LOVE.

'S BEEN A LONG TIME.

DID YOU *MISS* ME, THEN?

NAH.

BASTARD. *LOVE* YOU.

I *KNOW*.

IT'S THE *BEST* OF ALL *POSSIBLE* WORLDS.

WELL...?

She's dead.

DID SHE...?

She died peacefully. She died HAPPY.

YOU'VE GOT YOUR SODDING *SANDBAG* BACK, THEN.

SO.

WHERE ARE YOU GOING *NOW*?

HEHHH. *AREN'T* WE *ALL*, MATE? AREN'T WE *ALL*?

...I'LL GO WAKE CHAS UP, AND TAKE OFF BACK TO THE SMOKE, THEN. GOT *WORK* TO DO, EH?

YEAH. *GREAT.* THANKS.

TO HELL...

I'LL SEE YOU.

GOODBYE, Constantine.

HEY!
HANG ON! WAIT A MINUTE!
...PLEASE?
YES...?
WELL, I ...I DON'T LIKE TO ASK FOR *FAVORS*. IF THEY DON'T OWE *ME* SOMETHING...
I MEAN...I DON'T WANT TO BE IN *ANYONE'S DEBT*. IT'S JUST...
What are you ASKING, John Constantine?
IT'S JUST-- EVER SINCE *NEWCASTLE*. THE LAST *TEN YEARS*...
EVER SINCE NEWCASTLE I'VE BEEN HAVING THESE *NIGHTMARES*...
BAD ONES. *MOST* NIGHTS. AND...
I *WONDERED* IF YOU COULD...?
"I understand.
"Very well."
THANKS.
♪ AH-ONE, TWO, THREE, FOUR...
♪ MISTER SANDMAN, BRING ME A DREAM...♪
MAKE HER THE CUTEST THAT I'VE EVER SEEN...♫
♪GIVE HER THE WORD THAT I'M NOT A ROVER... THEN TELL ME THAT MY LONESOME LIFE IS OVER...♫♪

NEXT:
GOING TO HELL

SON OF ULTRON